REMARKS

The Examiner objected to the Abstract of the disclosure because of an error in line 5. The Abstract has been amended to correct the typographical error.

The Examiner objected to the Specification as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. Specifically, the objected phrases and a corresponding citation to each are listed as follows:

(a) "generating information"	pg 7, lines 23-24; 60/262,867 pg. 11, line 20.
(b) "gathering data"	Pg. 3, line 13; Pg. 6, lines 4-7; 60/262,867 pg. 11, line 14.
(c) "storing data"	Pg. 5, lines 23-24; 60/291,443 pg. 5, line 29 to pg. 6, line 1.
(d) "storing the gathered data"	Pg. 10, lines 14-18.
(e) "converting data"	change "converting" to "translating"
(f) "converting the stored data"	change "converting" to "translating"
(g) "utilizing the single database"	change "utilizing" to "manipulating"

The phrase "generating information" finds antecedent basis from the generated "vendor scorecards" (pg. 7, lines 23-24) that contain information based on supplier quality performance (pg. 1, lines 21-24; and pg. 4, lines 17-20). One of ordinary skill in the art would immediately recognize that a vendor scorecard, by its nature, would contain information related to a vendor's quality performance.

The applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's statements regarding the so-called "priority date claim objections." As stated in response to the previous two Office Actions, this application claims priority to three different provisional applications and has incorporated by reference the disclosures of such provisional applications. Thus, with respect to the subject matter disclosed in each of the provisional applications, this application is entitled to each of the claimed priority dates.

The Examiner objected to certain informalities in the language of Claims 1 and 2. Specifically, the Examiner stated that the phrase "gathering data .... in a plurality of different computer databases" should be amended to read "gathering data .... from a plurality of different computer databases." Regarding Claim 2, the Examiner stated that the term "non-compatible" should be changed to read "incompatible". Because the reading of Claims 1 and 2 are not substantively altered by the changes, Claims 1 and 2 have been amended to address the Examiner's objections.

The Examiner rejected independent Claim 1 as being obvious in view of the combined teachings of the McKay et al. and Huff references. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent Claim 1 defines a method of generating information regarding the quality of performance of a plurality of suppliers that each supply products to a vendor. The method includes gathering data regarding the quality of performance of the plurality of suppliers from a plurality of different computer databases. The gathered data from the plurality of different computer databases is then stored in a central controller. The central controller translates the stored data, contained therein, into a single database. Finally, the single database is used to generate information regarding the quality of performance of the plurality of suppliers.

The McKay et al. reference, as acknowledged by the Examiner, does not teach the step of gathering data from a plurality of databases. The McKay et al. reference further does not include the step of translating the data stored in a central controller into a single database. Rather, the McKay et al. reference teaches extracting data from a single audit reporting database (126) by way of a quality information network tool resident in an applications server (106). (see Par [0014], lines 6-7). The quality information network tool then extracts specific audit data from the audit reports and stores this data into a supplier quality performance database. (see Par. [0028], lines 1-4). Further, the McKay et al. reference teaches that the extracted data comes from data fields that are *replicated* from the audit report database 126. (see Par. [0017], lines 8-10 and Par. [0020], lines 7-10).

There is no teaching or suggestion that the quality information network tool stores data within itself, as done by the central controller of the invention. Further, the McKay et al. reference does not disclose that the quality information network tool *translates* data. Rather, the tool is disclosed as having the capability to *transfer* selected data from one database to another. The McKay et al. reference evinces no need to translate data because the data comes from *replicated* data fields. The McKay et al. reference provides a system where the data is compatible with the database because the data entry fields are *replicated*, or in other words exactly copied, from the database, namely the audit reports database (126).

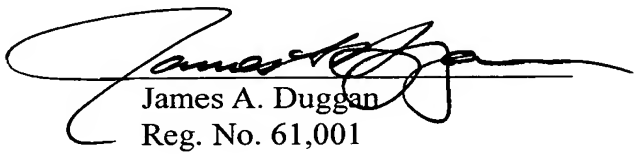
The Examiner relies upon the Huff reference to address the shortcoming of lacking a plurality of databases as recited in Claim 1. Considering the disclosure of the Huff reference in combination with the McKay et al. reference, the claimed invention would not have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art. As mentioned above, the McKay et al. system does not gather data from a plurality of different computer databases, store the data in a central controller for translation, and then translate the data into a single database, i.e. a common table, as specifically recited in independent Claim 1. The McKay et al. reference describes multiple databases for *output purposes* in order to provide appropriate information to the intended recipients. However, the McKay et al. reference provides only one input database having multiple data fields that are replicated, or copied exactly, for supplier and auditor data entry. The McKay et al. reference relies on the singular input database to obviate the prior art problem that "old audit methods provided inconsistent results where audit reports took on different formats depending upon the division requesting the audit, resulting in non-standardized audit reports and unsatisfactory results." (see Par [0004], lines 28-32).

The Huff reference discloses that "[t]he system also illustratively further comprises a program and data structure configured for converting data from Ancestral File and International Genealogical Index into a format compatible with the present system for online review and correcting of such data." (see Col. 6, lines 44-49) The

McKay et al. reference teaches away from the Huff reference by providing data entry from trading partners by way of *replicated data fields* that are, by nature, compatible.

Thus, because the data from the data fields is already compatible with the singular database, it would be illogical, and further fail to provide a more efficient system, to add the step from Huff of converting the already compatible data structure of McKay et al. As such, the combination of the McKay et al. and Huff references does not yield a method or system that (a) gathers data regarding the quality of performance of the plurality of suppliers from a plurality of different computer databases; (b) stores the gathered data from the plurality of different computer databases in a central controller; (c) translates the stored data in the central controller into a single database; and (d) manipulates the single database to generate information regarding the quality of performance of the plurality of suppliers, as specifically recited in independent Claim 1. Thus, the claimed invention is clearly patentable over the combined teachings of the McKay et al. and Huff references.

Respectfully submitted,



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